

From: Roger Dickerson
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 3:33pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom it May Concern,

I am against the settlement between the Department of Justice and Microsoft as it is currently designed. Microsoft has in the past used its operating systems monopoly to either enter new markets or run its competitors out of other markets. The best known example, and one that was established by the court, was Netscape in the browser wars. Since Microsoft Internet Explorer was bundled with Windows, Netscape Navigator could not compete even though it was freely downloadable. Most consumers will not go to the trouble to consider other options when a software package is included in the price they paid for their operating system.

Here are some more examples:
Microsoft included WordPad beginning with Windows95. This simple word processor only uses the file formats used by Microsoft Word. Now Lotus has left the office productivity business and Wordperfect is a shadow of its former self; both of the competing suites were much less expensive than Microsoft's.

Microsoft added networking and server capabilities to its operating systems, beginning marginally with Windows for Workgroups 3.11 and in earnest with Windows NT 3.1. Now Novell is a shadow of its former self even though its products were consistently faster and more stable than Microsoft's.

Now, after being found guilty of abusing its monopoly, Microsoft has released WindowsXP. This new product includes software for authoring CDs (competition: Roxio, Nero), updates to the Windows Media Player (competition: RealAudio, RealVideo, Apple Quicktime, WinAmp, etc). What will this bundling do to Microsoft's competitors? Furthermore WindowsXP will tell the user to join Microsoft's new Passport service _multiple times_ during and after installation. This will give Microsoft the user base needed to leverage web commerce sites to pay Microsoft to let them use Passport.

The current settlement agreement, it seems, will not do much to alter Microsoft's behavior. Microsoft will continue to use its monopoly drive its competitors out of business or into obscurity, and it will use its monopoly to force its way into new markets like Passport which will make the entire World Wide Web into a giant revenue stream for Microsoft.

I hope you will reject the current settlement and instead produce remedies that will punish Microsoft for what it has done and prevent it from doing so in the future.

Sincerely,
Roger Dickerson
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